

# Psychiatric Disabilities and Work Adaptations

Disability & Employment

## Psychiatric Disabilities: Job Accommodations

Most Effective and Frequently Used:

- **Flexible Workplace** – Telecommuting/Home
- **Scheduling** – Part-time, Flexible start times/work hours, job sharing
- **Leave** – mental health leave, unpaid leave, flexible vacation time
- **Breaks** – according to need – not schedule.
- **Other Policies:** on-site Job Coaches, beverages or food at workstations (for meds)

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### MODIFICATIONS

- Reduction and/or removal of distractions in work area.
- Music (with headset) to block out distractions.
- Addition of room dividers, partitions or other soundproofing or visual barriers.
- Reduction of workplace noise that can be adjusted (Telephones).
- Office/work space location away from noisy machinery.

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### EQUIPMENT

- Tape recorders for recording/reviewing meetings.
- "White noise" or environmental sound machines.
- Handheld electronic organizers, software calendars and organizer programs
- Remote job coaching, laptop computers, personal digital assistants and office computer access via remote locations.
- Software that minimizes computerized distractions such as pop-up screens.

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### JOB DUTIES

- Modification or removal of non-essential job duties.
- Division of large assignments into smaller tasks and goals.
- Additional assistance and/or time for orientation activities, training and learning job tasks and new responsibilities.
- Additional training or modified training materials.

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### MANAGEMENT/SUPERVISION

- Flexible and supportive supervision style; positive reinforcement.
- Adjustments in level of supervision or structure, such as more frequent meetings to help prioritize tasks.
- Additional forms of communication in the employee's preferred learning style (written, verbal, e-mail, demonstration) for assignments and instructions.
- Regularly scheduled meetings to discuss workplace issues, productivity, performance and promotional opportunities.
- Written work agreements that include any agreed upon accommodations, long-term and short-term goals, & clear expectations of responsibilities and consequences.

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